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SENATE RESOLUTION 127
By Harper

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Ms. Gwendolyn Vernice Smith for her meritorious service and pioneering efforts for the betterment of Tennessee education.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those educators who bring special attention to their schools and have given unreservedly of themselves to develop this state's most precious natural resource—our children; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Gwendolyn Smith is one such extraordinary educator who has served with dedication within the Metropolitan Public School System; and

WHEREAS, a product of the Sumner County School System, Ms. Smith graduated at the top of her class before attending Tennessee State University on an academic scholarship, where she received her Bachelor of Science degree in 1966; and

WHEREAS, committed to academic excellence, Gwendolyn Smith earned her Master's degree in Education Curriculum and Instruction and Early Childhood Education from George Peabody College in 1973. She also obtained certification in guidance and counseling to better serve her students; and

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WHEREAS, the good people of Nashville have long recognized and appreciated Ms. Smith's excellence as an educator and role model for young people as she inspires all of us to imagine a better future by encouraging excellence in her students; and

WHEREAS, this gifted educator has shared her teaching talents in a variety of capacities at several schools in the Nashville area; she began her exemplary career as a kindergarten Head Start aide with Metropolitan Public Schools while still attending college; and

WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Smith rendered admirable service as a tutor at Moses McKissack School and as a teacher at Napier School; and

WHEREAS, after serving as a kindergarten consultant, Ms. Smith worked in Metro schools as a resource reading teacher, an elementary consultant, an ESAA Phi specialist, and as an ESEA facilitator; and

WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Smith began her administrative career in education as the assistant principal at Una School and Cole School and subsequently became the principal at Bordeaux Elementary School in 1985, in which position she has earned the respect and admiration of her peers; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Smith is an extremely patient and giving person who motivates her faculty and students to reach their full potential, perhaps the greatest of all teaching gifts; and

WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Smith's varied work experience extends beyond the traditional classroom; she has served with distinction as a higher education instructor at Fisk University and Tennessee State University, a Christian education writer for Guidepost Periodicals for the Sunday School Publishing Board, and in the personnel department for Metropolitan Public Schools, in addition to working in adult education at St. Mary's Villa; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Smith's professional activities are quite notable and reflect her capacity to serve and lead effectively; she has served with acumen as a member of the National Elementary Principals Association, the Metro Nashville Teachers Association, the Vanderbilt Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa, the Phi Delta Kappa Teachers Sorority, Delta Kappa Gamma

Teachers Sorority, as a charter member of the Tennessee State University International Reading Association, and as a member of the Metro Schools Sunshine Singers; and

WHEREAS, Gwendolyn's superlative teaching skills have been recognized by her receipt of numerous awards and accolades, including the Pencil Foundation/Post Office Open Door Award, the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity-Nelson Senter Education Award, the Philanthropist Award for Humanity, and recognition for educational programs by State Representative Mary Pruitt; and

WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Smith has also been named the Outstanding Young Woman of America several times, the Outstanding Educator of America, Outstanding Teacher of Metro Davidson County, the Tennessee Statesman by State Senator Thelma Harper, and was one of two Tennessee Teachers featured in 1968; and

WHEREAS, well-known for her expertise in education and principal leadership, Ms. Smith has shared her vast knowledge as a presenter at a number of workshops, presentations, and conferences, and has been recognized statewide for her implementation of several innovative educational programs; and

WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Smith is an active and important part of the community and her profession, participating in numerous civic organizations, including the Nashville Chamber of Commerce, the NABSE/GNABSE, volunteering at the Children's Hospital, and being nominated to participate in Leadership Nashville; and

WHEREAS, she also contributes her time and many talents to serving on the executive board of the Alpha Delta Omega chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, Phi Delta Kappa, the Kiwanis Club of North Nashville, and the Business and Professional Womens Association. She has also served with alacrity on the board of directors of the South Street Community Center, the Cumberland Valley Girl Scouts, the American Red Cross-Youth Services, Kids on the Block, the Association of Retarded Citizens, and the Metro Teachers Credit Union; and

WHEREAS, loving the Lord and endeavoring to lead an exemplary Christian life, Ms. Smith faithfully worships the Lord at the Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, where she serves as the Sunday School Chaplain, the church clerk, a member of the board of trustee, and coordinator of the monthly "Ask an Educator" series; and

WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Smith is a never-ending source of inspiration to those who know and cherish her and is tremendously admired by students and staff alike; and

WHEREAS, highly regarded as a professional and a friend, Gwendolyn Smith is the perfect example of a person totally committed to quality education and the highest ideals of public service and should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we hereby honor and commend Ms. Gwendolyn Vernice Smith for her meritorious service in the field of education, salute her tireless commitment to the betterment of education in Tennessee, and extend to her our best wishes for continued success in all future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.